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Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Executive Office of Education

Feb 15 1994

EXECUTIVE

OFFICE OF EDUCATION

**Charter School Application
Designated Contact Person**

Please provide the Executive Office of Education with the following information identifying a designated contact person for the group submitting an application for charter school status. This form *must* be filed along with the charter school application no later than February 15, 1994. Please mail all required materials to:

Secretary of Education
ATTN: Charter Schools
Executive Office of Education
One Ashburton Place, Room 1401
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

Tel: (617) 727-1313

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS
COLLECTION

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Please print or type:

Committee to Found a Charter School for Creative Students

Name of organization/group filing for charter school status

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Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Executive Office of Education

Charter School Application

I/We, the undersigned charter school applicant(s), do hereby certify that the information provided herein and filed with the Executive Office of Education on this the 11th day of February (month) of the year 1994, is to the best of my/our knowledge, truthful and accurate.

(This signature sheet *must* be attached to the application when it is filed.)

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If more space is required, please attach additional sheets.

Executive Office of Education, One Ashburton Place, Room 1401, Boston, MA, 02108

CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION

PLYMOUTH COUNTY CHARTER SCHOOL FOR THE CREATIVE STUDENT

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1.) Mission Statement of the Plymouth County Charter School for the Creative Student:

The expression of a child's creative potential is at the heart of sustaining that child's motivation to learn.

An education is more than just the sum of that learned within each separate subject area. It should produce an individual who draws from a pool of knowledge that is fed by many diverse streams to create new ideas and new ways of looking at the world.

We will provide an academic environment where children with a demonstrated commitment to pursuing their creative potential are provided the opportunity to pursue their chosen area(s) of interest within an Arts-Integrated school program and to share in the direction of their learning experience.

2.) School Objectives:

A.) What are the school's broad academic objectives for student learning?

The goal underlying our academic curriculum is to convey to the student that learning should be experienced as a whole whose parts are constantly interconnecting. We will move away from the trend towards specialization in education at the expense of integration. We believe that this is especially critical in the middle school and early high-school years when students are first being exposed to subject areas as separate entities. Our faculty will not only be cognizant that they are guiding their students through four years within their own subject area, but they will also maintain an awareness of what their students are being exposed to in other areas. Faculty will strive to cross subject lines wherever possible so that a fact or figure central to one subject may be reflected simultaneously within the context of many other subjects. Our students will come to experience all areas within a given subject as parts of a bigger whole and to appreciate and to seek out actively the interconnections among disciplines.

B.) Describe any non-academic goals for student performance.

All students will have the opportunity to develop their skills in their chosen area(s) of artistic concentration and to create original works in their field. The nurturing of creative thinking and of independent, student-directed endeavors will be an equal partner with the provision of a solid background in traditional academic areas.

C.) What type of community environment do you hope to foster at your school?

Our goal is to create an environment where each student's uniqueness is valued and respected by teacher and student alike, where each student becomes invested in the success of every other student, as it becomes defined by that individual student.

Our goal is to create an environment where students experience themselves as active participants in the acquisition of their education, where teachers are experienced as mentors and guides.

Our goal is to create an environment that instills in its students a life-long love of learning.

3.) Statement of Need:

A.) *Why is there a need for this type of school?*

While this Charter School will not be limited to students excelling in the arts, the arts are often areas where children most easily find the opportunity to express themselves creatively, and the ability to think creatively forms the foundation for the development of new knowledge.

At the same time, courses in the arts are traditionally one of the areas most severely affected by school budget cuts.

- Over the past few years Duxbury has seen its Elementary-School Art and Music Programs go to combined classes of close to 40 students per class.
- The Sixth-Grade Art Program has been dropped to an elementary-school level of one class a week instead of being offered every other day.
- Art and Music are no longer required at the Junior-High-School level.
- The High School is considering eliminating the art and the music requirement.
- Art and Music cannot be taken simultaneously because there is not enough time allotted in the day for both these subjects to be taken.
- The supply budget has been reduced by 40% in the Art Department, and both Art and Music have seen significant staff reductions.
- Duxbury's Orchestra and Band programs have traditionally been strong state and national competitors, but with program cuts at the Elementary- and Junior-High-School levels, there are fewer and less-well trained students (who depend solely on the school music program) to fill the High-School Music Program.
- The Drama Department has had to reduce substantially or scale down its yearly program of productions due to lack of financial resources within the budget.

While this is a loss to any student, it is particularly critical in a system like Duxbury's, which has consistently produced a disproportionately higher-than-normal number of students achieving recognition in the arts.

- Duxbury's Music students are consistently represented at the junior- and senior-high-school levels in All-State Band and Orchestra groups.
- Duxbury's Drama students are consistently represented as winners at state-level drama competitions.
- Over the past three years, an average of over 25% of all PTA Reflections winners in the arts at the state level have come from Duxbury. Last year one of our music students won at the national level.

To lose these avenues for self-expression is particularly critical in the strongly creative child and contributes heavily to alienation, isolation, and withdrawal from investing themselves in their school experience.

Historically the arts have provided a forum for the expression and integration of a culture's ideas. We are living in an increasingly complex world, and it is crucial to prepare children to be able to ingest and integrate knowledge from widely divergent sources.

In traditional education, standardized courses are taught on an even increasingly specialized basis. If children are taught in a compartmentalized fashion with decreasing opportunities for self-expression (due to budgetary constraints, increased class size, etc.) then they will come to think in a compartmentalized fashion and will respond to their world accordingly.

B.) *Explain why a charter school would help to effectively address this need?*

A Charter School would provide those students with exceptional talent in and/or commitment to a creative area with course work and practicum experience currently beyond the capacity of the existing public school to provide.

A Charter School would forge a partnership between the ability to express oneself creatively and the ability to bring that creative thinking back into an academic forum to stimulate the creation of new ideas. Academics and the Arts would not be seen as competitors, but as different sides of the same whole.

A charter School would move away from the current trend towards specialization to a philosophy that encourages a student to explore an area in depth, but which always provides that student with the time to integrate that area back into the whole.

4.) School Demographics

A.) *Describe the area where the school will be located. If a facility has already been secured, please state so.*

Duxbury has a beautiful campus-like setting which houses many facilities, including the Duxbury Jr./Sr. High School (Grades 7-12), the Duxbury Elementary School (Grades 3-6), the Duxbury Public Library, The Percy Walker Pool, The Duxbury Community Television Studios, Fisher College, the Ellison Center for the Arts and Duxbury Youth Ballet. Also, within walking distance are the Duxbury Art Complex and many trails leading to ponds, salt marshes and the ocean.

Due to budget constraints, the Duxbury Public Schools redistricted their school populations and buildings in 1992 resulting in vacant space at this campus. One such building, the "Alden Upper," has a first floor of handicapped-accessible classrooms and gymnasium that is currently not rented out.

Although this space is not officially secured by this application deadline, there is good reason to be optimistic. The Town of Duxbury and the Duxbury Public Schools already have tenants to fill some of their vacant classrooms in other buildings, and it is advantageous to both the renters and the tenants to keep these buildings vital.

B.) *Why was this location selected? Are there any other locations suitable to the needs and focus of the school?*

The location was selected because of the apparent availability of classroom space as a result of the redistricting of the Duxbury Public Schools. The "Upper Alden" is a separate building offering a myriad of opportunities for the Charter School to utilize the well-appointed traditional classrooms and nearby educational and enrichment facilities. On the campus or within walking distance there are playing fields and playgrounds for outdoor leisure time, the public library with its computerized inter-library network for research, two small theaters and two small auditoriums for live performances, the community television studios associated with Adelphia Cable TV, music and dance-studio space, and many opportunities for lab sciences with the wetlands ecosystem close at hand.

C.) *Describe any unique characteristics of the student population to be served.*

All students will share the trait of being independently motivated to develop their creative potential. While the school is built on an Arts-Integrated approach to education and we anticipate that the majority of our students will be strongly arts-oriented, the broader goal is to bring this creative expression to every aspect of learning. We recognize that a student who is strongly motivated to pursue math or science beyond the scope of a traditional curriculum will be equally suited for our program, and provision will be made for this possibility.

D.) *What is the school's anticipated enrollment?*

We anticipate an initial enrollment of 120 students.

E.) *What grade levels will be served? How many students are expected to be in each grade or grouping?*

Grades five, six, seven, and eight will be served during the first year of operation. It is our long-term goal to expand our program to serve grades nine, ten, eleven, and twelve. However, we want to begin with a narrower age- and grade-range to focus better our initial efforts. It is our plan to expand upward with one grade level every year.

We will open with two sections of each grade level, with up to fifteen students in each section.

5.) Recruiting and Marketing Plan:

A.) *Demonstrate how you will publicize the school to attract a sufficient pool of applicants.*

Public announcements will be made through the local news media in order to explain the creation of the new Charter School. Public information nights will be set up to describe the school to interested parents and students. Area school administrators and guidance departments will be provided with pertinent information.

B.) Specifically, what type of outreach will be made to potential students and their families?

Outreach will be made through contacting special programs such as dance schools, conservatories, arts organizations, private music teachers and professional organizations of private arts instructors.

6.) Admissions Policy:

A.) Describe the admissions methods and standards you will use to select students.

Students must demonstrate through current class performance and/or current standardized reports, such as ERBs or SRAs, that they are capable of sustaining progress in all traditional academic areas without significant difficulty. While exceptions may be made in the case of an exceptionally talented or an exceptionally committed individual, it would be with the understanding that significant academic remediation is currently beyond the scope of this Charter School and would have to be the responsibility of the family involved, according to a mutually agreed-upon plan in place prior to admission. Assistance from the students parent district would be the avenue of choice in contracting for specific services with appropriate professionals in our own geographic area.

Students will be further required to show, either through audition and/or portfolio or demonstration of their work, through letters of recommendation, and through interview that they possess a strong degree of talent in a particular creative area, *or* a high degree of interest in and commitment to developing their creative potential in a given area. This will occur through a non-threatening, supportive process aimed at drawing a student out, rather than by forming a judgment.

The admissions process itself should reflect the tone of the school in that the prospective student will be helped to discover whether this school is a good match. Emphasis will be placed on working directly with the child in this decision-making process.

B.) Explain how these policies further the mission of the school in a non-discriminatory fashion.

The selection process is a natural reflection of the mission of the school, which is to identify and serve those students who, at this point in their lives, would best benefit from an arts-integrated, holistic approach to education, without regard to race, creed, sex, or national origin. In fact, by establishing a school in Duxbury that will draw from a wider geographic area, it is hoped that we will serve a more diverse group than the population currently indigenous to Duxbury.

7.) Profile of Founding Coalition:

A.) Describe the make-up of the group or partnership that is working together to apply for a charter.

We are primarily a group of parents who share an interest in providing an alternative education to our school-age children. Some of us are artists, musicians, educators, professionals and business people who have always had an interest in educational alternatives, particularly those which incorporate the arts.

B.) Discuss how the group came together, as well as any affiliation with existing schools, educational programs, businesses, non-profits, or any other entities or groups.

This group was formed as a result of discussions among parents whose children participate in the South Shore Conservatory of Music, community theater groups and the Duxbury Youth Ballet. After realizing the availability of the school facility, we were encouraged to pursue this charter. Discussions concerning affiliation have been initiated with the South Shore Conservatory of Music, Duxbury Youth Ballet, local artists, computer specialists and scientists.

C.) Include any plans for further recruitment of founders or organizers of the school.

We are a new group actively seeking input from members of the community interested in furthering the stated goals of the school.

8.) Timetable:

A.) Discuss a timetable of events leading to the opening of a charter school.

Timetable for Opening the Plymouth County Charter School for the Creative Student

March 1994

1. Award of Charter Status
2. Formation of Board of Trustees
3. Begin recruitment of Advisory Board
4. Create Administrative, Financial and Educational Committees within Board
5. Develop policies concerning salaries, contracts, hiring and dismissal, benefits and staff development.
6. Begin work on Part III of Charter Application

April 1994

1. Begin discussions with outside groups to contract non-academic services
2. Begin negotiations with Duxbury for facility rental
3. Finance committee begins budgeting

May 1994

1. Press releases to announce formation of school and describe educational goals.
Press releases will continue throughout the pre-opening phase

June 1994

1. Admissions Committee forms and begins soliciting students
2. Finance Committee submits budget for Board approval
3. Education Committee submits reports

August 1994

1. Consulting Engineer submits report on school building condition

September 1994

1. Begin enlisting local business support
2. Sign lease

January 1995

1. Advertise teaching and administrative positions

February 1995

1. Building Committee forms to oversee preparation of building for July opening

March 1995

1. Begin interviewing teachers and administrators

May 1995

1. Offers go out to teachers and administrators
2. Contracts are signed

June 1995

1. June 1 -- Deadline for student admission
2. Final building preparation completed
3. Teachers and Administrators meet to go over curriculum
4. Board, Teachers and Administrators approve final educational plan
5. Teachers begin to prepare for summer session

July 1995

1. Summer Program begins school year

9.) Evidence of Support:

A.) Try to convey as clearly as possible the scope of community backing for the proposed charter school.

The Charter School is supported by a wide range of professionals, including educators, as evidenced by the letters of support to follow.

10.) Educational Program:

A.) Core academic subjects of Mathematics, English, Science, History, and a Modern Foreign Language will be taught within a modified modular approach.. Wherever possible, time should not be a limiting factor to a child's pursuit of an intellectual or artistic interest. Forty-five-minute periods will frame the division of the day. Subjects will be taught over one or two of these periods for either half or all of the school year, dependent upon the needs and demands of that particular subject.

Core arts programs in Dance, Drama, Music, and Visual Arts will be offered within the same modular framework on a daily basis. Other opportunities for participation in a physical activity as an alternative to dance will be offered during this block as well as an opportunity for the student to elect to pursue an interest independently, under faculty guidance.

The greater the time a teacher teaches a student, the better that teacher understands that student's learning needs. Likewise, the more time teachers can devote to a particular subject area, the greater the depth and breadth of knowledge they can then communicate to the students. Continuity of experience will be achieved through a departmental, rather than grade-level, orientation. The same teacher will guide the student through all of middle school within a particular subject area, continuing to build on that student's strengths and helping that student to strengthen any weaknesses observed over time. This approach also allows a teacher to address the entire scope of a field when designing a curriculum that will integrate what is traditionally taught as separate, often unconnected, courses.

Discussion and debate will be seen as an essential component of every class period. Students will be encouraged to discover answers for themselves, working cooperatively, rather than competitively, and to generate new questions or new problems than will then be addressed by the group. Teachers will use a multi-sensory presentation of material aimed at actively engaging the student in the acquisition of new information.

Fundamental to planning within each discipline will be the goal of teaching across the curriculum. A key component will be integrating the evolution of the arts as they reflect the evolution of humankind.

Homework:

Learning, albeit exciting, requires a tremendous expenditure and focus of energy from a child. Daily homework, as such, will be incorporated into the school day so that when children leave, they can, if they choose, leave with a feeling of closure that that day's work is done. Daily homework will be designed solely to reinforce new concepts that have been learned that day. It should take no more than 15-20 minutes per subject so that four subjects can be covered in the Study Block that forms the last period of the day. Students will be encouraged to work cooperatively and will be allowed, upon mutual agreement between the teacher and the student, to assess for themselves how much additional work within each subject is necessary before they feel they have mastered the new concepts. Teachers will be available from 8:00-8:30 each morning for individual or group extra-help or additional advisory meetings for independent study projects. (This will not be seen as a substitute for more in-depth tutorial work which might be needed.)

At the same time, it is important that students expand on the work that is done in class and prepare for new material to be introduced. Each Monday all teachers will present the students with a long-term assignment of this nature that will come due the following Monday. It will be the province of the student to determine whether he/she wishes to complete this during the school week, to work on it over the weekend, or some combination thereof. This procedure actively engages the student in directing this aspect of the academic plan. Time spent will be adjusted with respect to the age of the child.

Reading will be considered apart from daily homework and, to a certain extent, apart from long-term weekly assignments. Reading itself will not be taught as a separate entity as it has come to be in traditional school systems. The study of English literature as an art form and as a means of communication will fall within the province of the English teacher. A syllabus will be presented at the beginning of the academic year to cover the entire year. Students will be expected to keep pace, but may also read ahead in any order and within their own time frame. In addition, a supplementary reading list will be given in all other subjects. Students will be expected to choose at least one book in each subject each quarter. No formal project or report will be required. Instead, students will be expected to contribute ideas that this book has stimulated in them to their class discussions. Thus "Reading" will be interdisciplinary in its scope.

The Charter School recognizes the value of childhood as a time that comes but once. While education is a central part of childhood, it should never become so all-encompassing as to hamper the growing process that occurs simultaneously but apart from school. No formal school work will be given over vacations or during the summer session.

Academic Coursework:

Along with the study of English literature will go the development of effective communication skills through writing, and they will be seen as two parts of a whole. Students will be encouraged to compare and contrast their distinctive writing styles with those of other classmates as well as with those of various authors being studied. Writing styles will be seen as a unique reflection of personality and temperament, as literature reflects the events and temperament of its time. Reading and writing will always go hand-in-hand as the student simultaneously studies and produces different forms of literature. The fundamentals of grammar and punctuation will be incorporated into the larger scope of what makes good literature and effective communication. Spelling will be a natural weekly component of every subject, rather than an isolated entity. While a critical concept of spelling will be focused on weekly and will be the responsibility of the English

teacher to establish as part of the lesson plan, the actual works will reflect all subject areas and will arise naturally from what is being studied. Because of the breadth of what is being subsumed under English, this subject will be taught over two 45-minute slots daily, and for the full four quarters.

Science and History will also be taught over two 45-minute periods daily, but will alternate, Science being taught for two quarters and History being taught for two quarters. In Science, the longer class periods allow greater opportunity for lab work and experimentation, which will be combined with, rather than separated from, classroom teaching and discussion. The emphasis in Science will be on some type of ongoing or self-contained project to be worked on daily, which will actively involve the students in the learning process.

History will be taught from a global perspective. Time periods will be covered versus the more traditional geographic focus. Thus History will always be World History. Students will develop a global understanding of the evolution of cultures, religions, and ethical systems as they occurred simultaneously over time. In this way, students will come to experience themselves as part of an evolving world. In viewing cultures as developing simultaneously, boundaries become artificial and a much deeper "social study" is achieved. Within the longer class periods, students will be afforded the opportunity daily to go beyond the acquisition of facts into the exploration of psychology, sociology, and ethics as they arose within their historical context.

A foreign language almost requires a modular approach to be taught effectively, but needs constant reinforcement to be maintained and enhanced. Foreign Language will comprise half of each day during the Summer Session and will be approached then through total immersion. A more formal approach to acquiring an understanding of grammar will follow when the foreign language is taught daily for a 45-minute period throughout the rest of the year. Nonetheless, the student will "meet" the language in an atmosphere similar to that of a child learning a native tongue, and this experience will be renewed yearly. Through this experience, students will develop an "instinct" for correct usage. As the student progresses in the foreign language, greater emphasis will also be placed on a study of the literature and culture native to this language. Initially the Charter School will offer only one foreign language, most probably a Western European language. However, it is our plan to introduce a second language choice at some point in the future. This language will be a "critical" language (Russian, Chinese, Japanese, etc.).

The remaining 45-minute period during the academic section of the day will cover Mathematics, which will be taught daily for four quarters. A "hands-on" approach to understanding concepts will be the method of choice, as the multi-sensory approach becomes particularly important. Relevancy to everyday living and to other subjects will be stressed, so that Mathematics does not occur in a vacuum. Creativity will be encouraged in helping students to discover mathematical relationships, so that the "why" is always fully understood before the "how to" is committed to memory. Addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division will be taken together as parts of a whole interrelationship of numbers, rather than as separate, isolated operations.

Non-academic Coursework:

For children whose avenue of expression tends to be writing, there will be ample opportunity throughout the academic day to develop this skill creatively. For children whose avenue lies more within other art forms, there will be a block of two 45-minute periods daily where students can avail themselves of opportunities in dance, drama, music, and visual arts. As with the academic subjects, time should not be a limiting factor. A number of courses will be offered over one or two periods within the block. These courses will be on a par with the more traditional academic courses in value to the School, instead of being viewed as elective, or additional, or more easily expendable as their place has developed currently in mainstream education. Thus the

message will be conveyed to the students that their efforts in, dedication to, and love of these art forms is every bit as important as achievement in their academic areas. The goal of the Charter School is the development of creativity and of creative thinking. To accomplish this, students must be provided with opportunities to be creative where their desire to be creative is strongest, and they must also be provided with these opportunities within an environment that holds these areas in high esteem.

We anticipate that there will be children whose strongest areas of creativity will not be within the arts, but whose creative nature and commitment to the exploration of new ideas will make them an ideal match for our program. We also anticipate that there will be students who are arts-oriented who will want to branch out into areas of independent study and expression. During the afternoon block, there will be the opportunity for these students to do an independent activity. Each student, together with an advisor, will map out a project to be completed within one quarter. It will be the responsibility of the student to formulate the idea, and the responsibility of the advisor to help the student to shape it into a manageable project that can reach some closure, if only to be identified as preliminary exploration to lead to further work within the allotted time period. Part of the independent activity itself will be identifying, pursuing, and obtaining the resources needed to complete the project, with the help of the advisor. Professional or pre-professional work could be, but would not have to be, used in completing this block.

In always striving towards the education of the whole person, each student will be required to partake of at least 1 Visual Art, 1 Music, and 2 Physical Activity periods every week each quarter and to participate in at least 1 Independent Activity segment every year. Opportunities in all the art forms will be scheduled so that students can easily cross disciplines and not be confined to developing in only one area at a time. Students not interested in Dance will be offered other rotating options for physical activity. Teachers in the academic areas and teachers in the arts areas will work closely together to further the Charter School's goal of an education that constantly integrates work in all areas of the student's growth.

Experience with computers will form the final component of this afternoon block. Not all students will be interested in pursuing the use of computers in depth, but the opportunity will be provided for those who are. However, the Charter School's writing program will place heavy emphasis on desk-top publishing by the students. All students will be required to participate in the computer program to the point where they become comfortable with touch-typing and word-processing.

Summer Session:

In recognition of the fact that learning and creative expression do not follow a nine-month schedule, the Charter School will follow a twelve-month calendar. At the same time, it is acknowledged that a change of pace and focus may be needed periodically, especially over the summer months, so our Summer Session will be significantly different from the four quarters of the traditional academic year.

Our foreign-language immersion program will comprise the morning component of a three-day week that begins a bit later in the day and runs for six weeks in mid-summer. Students will participate in a variety of activities that will rotate daily and change mid-session. These activities will be conducted completely in the target language and will be geared towards interaction and having fun. Students will not be grouped by grade, but rather a heterogeneous mix of all grades will be formed into six groups that will be led by an instructor and an aide. This will provide for different levels of fluency among the students, encouraging greater peer cooperation in sustaining what can initially seem like a difficult experience. It also provides an opportunity for students who do not often interact with each other to interact and develop relationships with one another. Activities will be stressed that require cooperation for successful completion. Students will be

expected to communicate in the target language during the summer-session lunch period as well. Parents will be encouraged to participate in this period whenever possible and to establish their own foreign-language "immersion times" at home.

Following a short break after lunch, the remainder of the day will be devoted to participation in the student's chosen field of creative expression for that summer session. The Art studios will be open, and students can experiment with a new technique, learn a new skill, or work on an ongoing project they designed. Students can continue with private instruction in Music, participate in a concert, or compose a new work. Dance students can continue with their class instruction and participate in a ballet or other work at the end of the session. Students can choose to participate in a play that might be an original work produced during the year by an English class or by an individual working through an Independent Activity. (On alternate summer sessions, the Dance, Music, and Drama teachers may combine to produce a program that integrates all of these performing arts.)

Students may also choose to devote this block of the Summer Session to working on an Independent Activity under the guidance of a faculty member or an advisor outside the school staff. The time frame of this block will be determined by the activity involved and is expected to vary widely.

Outreach:

In keeping with our philosophy of educating the whole person and integrating this education across disciplines, it is our goal to create a practical awareness of the world outside of Duxbury. To that end, one Friday every month each quarter will be devoted to either taking our students to an event or facility that ties in with an area currently being studied, or to bringing an individual or a group to our students whose aim will be to broaden and make more tangible an area being studied. Throughout the year we will strive for a healthy mix of the academic and non-academic areas.

Guest instructors and guest artists will be invited to teach during the summer session to provide students with new perspectives and to provide the faculty with a free block of time during which they can renew their own creative energies.

A leave of absence can be granted at any time during the school year to students with a unique opportunity to broaden themselves in other ways. It will be the responsibility of the parents and student to demonstrate how they will allot time and resources to keep pace in academic areas so that the student is not at a disadvantage upon returning to school. It will be the responsibility of the faculty to help make home schooling possible during such a leave.

B.) *What is the basis for the teaching methods used?*

While we will respect the autonomy of the teachers to employ any particular methods to which they subscribe, they will have to adhere to the mission of the school, which as stated in the mission statement, and in brief, is to develop the intellectual and artistic potential of each student from a global perspective in a non-authoritarian, non-threatening, and welcoming environment. Although there are educators among the individuals proposing the Charter School, we do not subscribe to any one particular pedagogical approach. However, we are aware of new (and not-so-new) directions in education, which we have had cause to mention in describing the implementation of the curriculum. Such approaches as "arts-integrated," "across-the-curriculum," "total immersion," and "student-directed" appeal to our philosophy. However, we would be open to any methodology that agrees in spirit with our stated mission.

C.) Describe the school calendar and hours of operation of the school.

School Calendar 1995-96

Sept 5 - Nov 3	First Quarter (Labor Day, Columbus Day)
Nov 6 - Jan 26	Second Quarter (Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving, Martin Luther King, Winter Break)
Jan 29 - Apr 6	Third Quarter (February Vacation)
Apr 9 - June 15	Fourth Quarter (April Vacation)
July - August	Summer Session

Vacations

Dec 19 - Jan 2	Winter Break
Feb 16 - Feb 25	February Vacation
Apr 20 - 29	Spring Break
June 15 - July 8	Summer Break I
Aug 17 - Sept 5	Summer Break II

School Day

Fifth Grade - Academic Portion

	Section 1	Section 2
8:30-10:00	English	Life Science/Pre-History
10:00-10:20	Break	Break
10:20-11:50	Life Science/Pre-History	English
11:50-12:25	Lunch	Lunch
12:25-1:10	Language	Practical Math
1:20-2:05	Practical Math	Language
2:05-2:25	Break	Break

Two teachers will share teaching responsibilities for the fifth grade. One will teach English and Language to both sections; the other will teach Life Science, Pre-History, and Math to both sections.

Sixth Grade - Academic Portion

	Section 1	Section 2
8:30-10:00	English (English Teacher 1)	English (English Teacher 2)
10:00-10:20	Break	Break
10:20-11:50	Earth Science*	Ancient History*
11:50-12:25	Lunch	Lunch
12:25-1:10	Geometry	Language
1:20-2:05	Language	Geometry
2:05-2:25	Break	Break

* Classes will switch mid-year.

Seventh Grade - Academic Portion

	Section 1	Section 2
8:30-9:15	Pre-Algebra	Language
9:25-10:10	Language	Pre-Algebra
10:10-10:30	Break	Break
10:30-12:00	English (Teacher 1)	English (Teacher 2)
12:00-12:35	Lunch	Lunch
12:35-2:25	Physical Science*	Middle History*
2:05-2:15	Break	Break

* Classes will switch mid-year.

Eighth Grade - Academic Portion

	Section 1	Section 2
8:30-10:00	Chemistry*	Modern History*
10:00-10:20	Break	Break
10:20-11:05	Algebra I	Language
11:15-12:00	Language	Algebra I
12:00-12:35	Lunch	Lunch
12:35-2:05	English (Teacher 1)	English (Teacher 2)
2:05-2:15	Break	Break

*Classes will switch mid-year.

All Grades - Non-Academic Portion†

Monday:

A: 2:15-3:00	Ballet	Theory/Comp.	Drama	Sport	Computer	IA *
B: 3:00-3:55	"	Music History	Art Hist.	"	"	"

Tuesday:

A:	Tap	Chorus	Stagecraft	Sport	Computer	IA *
B:	Jazz	Chamber Ensemble	Handwork	"	"	"

Wednesday:

A:	Ballet	Art	Drama	Sport	Computer	IA *
B:	"	"	"	"	"	"

Thursday:

A:	Tap	Art	Private Music Lesson	Sport	Computer	IA *
B:	Jazz	"	"	"	"	"

† Each column represents a choice

*IA - Independent Activity

At the beginning of each quarter, students will choose an activity for period A and period B for each day.

The non-academic portion of each day will be followed by a break from 3:55-4:10. A study from 4:10-5:30 will end each day.

On Friday, Blocks A and B will be left open for students to wrap up academic or non-academic projects they have been pursuing during the week.

11.) Student Performance:

A.) Describe your proposed plan to assess student performance.

Students will be evaluated by means of quarterly progress reports. These will be prepared by each subject teacher and will focus not so much on grades *per se* as on the student's ability for and success at mastering the material presented. Teachers will evaluate each student's strengths and weaknesses, demonstration of improvement through the year and participation in the class.

Tests will be given at various times throughout the year to gauge the extent of the student's learning but not to punish if that learning is deficient. Many subjects, such as writing and arts are best served by ongoing teacher evaluation, with improvement being the goal. In many areas, the process of arriving at a quality goal is the most important way for the student to be successful in learning.

B.) What remediation will be available for underperforming students?

Since each student will be assigned an advisor, who will supervise their independent study, this advisor will also be responsible for seeing that remediation, if necessary, occurs at an early stage. This could be accomplished through peer tutoring. The source of remediation beyond the scope of peer tutoring or occasional reinforcement by the appropriate teacher will be jointly determined by the advisor, parents and student.

C.) How will the development of skills be measured?

Standardized tests will be utilized to assess students' skills development. These will be administered on an annual basis.

12.) School Evaluation:

A.) What methods of self-assessment or evaluation will be used to ensure that the school is meeting its stated mission and objectives?

Semi-annual meetings by the Faculty, Administration and Board of Trustees will be held to evaluate the school and its goals up to that point. Corrective measures will be implemented at that time if necessary.

In addition, Faculty/Administration meetings will be held on a schedule to be determined by them, to discuss fulfillment of the school's mission and immediate educational objectives.

The Board of Trustees will meet on at least a monthly basis to address policy, fiscal and/or legal concerns.

B.) *How will the school establish regular dialogue with parents? With the community?*

Dialogue with parents:

- 1) A weekly newsletter will be sent home with students, containing school bulletin items, business notes and reminders.
- 2) Class meetings will be held regularly during the school year. Topics such as the curriculum, child development, school policies and special school events will be discussed. Parents will have the opportunity to ask questions and discuss their concerns with the teacher, as well as share together their perceptions of the children as they grow.
- 3) Parent-teacher conferences will be held twice a year to provide an opportunity for parents and teachers to share their impressions and concerns. Individual conferences can be arranged at any time if parents have a special concern about their child. Teachers appreciate being informed of significant changes or circumstances in the child's life.
- 4) Parents can volunteer to be class parents, who will help to organize parent meetings, welcome new families to the school and assist the teacher in various ways. Class parents share with the teacher the commitment to fostering open relationships between teachers and parents and among the parents themselves.

Dialogue with the community:

- 1) The school will actively solicit input and involvement with those members of the community interested in furthering the goals of the school. This would be done first by personal outreach by present members of the school community.
- 2) The school will publish a quarterly or semi-annual (depending on budget) newsletter containing news of the school, upcoming shows or projects by students and discussion of the school's educational and philosophical goals. Reports written by teachers, from a teacher's perspective will be important to the newsletter. Active solicitation of people in the community who would be compatible with the goals of the school will be a focus of the newsletter as well. The newsletter will be distributed to households in the area served by the school.
- 3) Mailing list signups will be available at school events for interested people.

13.) Human Resource Information:

A.) *How will teaching and administrative staff be selected? Describe the standards to be used in the hiring process, including teacher certification requirements or any other professional credentials. What is the targeted staff size?*

Teaching staff will be selected by an interviewing process that will consist of several phases: 1) Resumé and reference submission (3 references will be required), 2) Initial interview, 3) Teaching Demonstration consisting of at least one day in the classroom with observation by at least 2 teachers during the day and 4) Final interview.

(In the start-up phase, #3, Teaching Demonstration, will be achieved during the interview process through questions allowing for evaluation of the teacher's teaching ability, and ability to spark interest and excitement in the students.)

The school will be looking for the following qualities in its teachers:

- 1) Expertise in their field, consisting of appropriate degrees in that field or equivalent practical experience in that field.
- 2) A developmental approach towards the growth of the child, taking into account the different rates of emotional, intellectual and physical maturity that occur at different ages. The

school and its teachers will be geared toward nurturing the growth of the whole child, not just the intellectual side.

- 3) Experience working with older children and pre-adolescents, and enjoyment in and liking for them.
- 4) For those teaching an academic subject, experience, even if not professional, in an art form.
- 5) Commitment to integrating arts into the academic curriculum.
- 6) Ability to nurture the growth of creativity in their students.
- 7) Innovative and creative teaching methods, and a willingness to explore different avenues of teaching and learning.
- 8) A demonstrated positive attitude toward teaching children and life in general.
- 9) Certification would be an asset but is *not* mandatory.

Administrative staff will be selected by a 2-phase process: 1) Resumé and reference submission (2 references will be required) and 2) Interview. A follow-up interview may also be required. The school favors hiring administrators who would also be interested in teaching, for this would aid in the cohesiveness of the school and its vision. Such administrators would be chosen using the guidelines for teachers, as well as the following guidelines for administrators:

1) Expertise in the following areas, depending on the position desired: a) Admissions, b) Marketing and Fundraising, c) Day-to-day administration of a school, d) Computer literacy and e) Clerical skills.

In addition, all administrators should enjoy and be skilled at interacting with the public, for in many cases they will be the first ones to be seen at the school.

The targeted staff size for teachers in a 15:1 ratio between students and teachers. The targeted staff size for administrators is 2 per 60-100 students.

B.) *How will teachers and administrators be evaluated? How often?*

The aim of evaluations is to promote ever higher standards in teaching through conversation with colleagues, visitation and continual self-evaluation.

Evaluation of teachers will be 2-tiered, consisting of self-evaluation and peer evaluation.

Self-evaluation: Teachers will maintain a written record of their reflections for their own use -- to be reviewed and updated once a year. Teachers should share their self-evaluations with colleagues at least once a year.

Peer Evaluation: The peer teacher should observe the teacher being evaluated on at least 2 consecutive days. Peers should fill out Evaluative Criteria for Teachers (attached), followed by a meeting with the teacher to discuss the evaluation. Suggestions for improvement should also be given to the teacher.

New Teachers: New teachers will be assigned an advisor, with whom they will meet regularly over the course of the year. The advisor will visit the new teacher's classes and make observations and suggestions in conference and in writing. A review of all new teachers will take place in January.

Similar evaluations will be used for administrators. In addition, administrators will be evaluated by the Board of Trustees in terms of their success in implementing the objectives of the school and their success in smoothly running the school on a day-to-day basis.

Evaluative Criteria for Teachers

We ask that teachers speak with a colleague before and after a visit, using these criteria as a framework. A report should also be made to the Faculty within a week of the visit.

I. Teaching Environment

- A. Is this the appropriate room for this class?
- B. Orientation, spacing of desks or work areas
- C. Are cold, heat or lighting a factor?
- D. How is the outside noise level?

II. Content of Lesson

- A. Appropriate for age level?
- B. Challenges the student?
- C. Clarity of presentation
- D. Enthusiasm in presentation?
- E. Responsiveness of students?
- F. Is there a "sense for the whole"?
- G. Artistry in presentation

III. Form and Discipline

- A. Is the lesson formed in a way that allows the students to receive the content?
- B. Teacher's authority and presence before the class, *i.e.* the whole group
- C. Teacher's response to individual disciplinary problems, difficult situations
- D. Does the teacher address the intellectual, emotional and physical needs of the students?
- E. Appearance of room, students and teacher

IV. Teacher/Student Relationship

- A. Warmth in teacher/student relationship?
- B. Student/student interaction?
- C. Does the teacher promote positive social interaction within the class?
- D. Is the teacher available for one-on-one help, conversation, etc?

V. Academic, Artistic and Pedagogical Standards

- A. Is the class as a whole working hard, performing at grade level, eager to acquire new knowledge?
- B. Does the teacher promote high academic standards?
- C. Quality of good book work
- D. Does the teacher follow through on homework, correction, etc.?
- E. Teacher's ability to integrate arts into the lesson
- F. Does the teacher delve into the curriculum and thoroughly prepare his/her lessons?
- G. Is the teacher teaching to the appropriate grade level? To all skill levels?

C.) Describe any other relevant employee information, including but not limited to: salaries, contracts, hiring and dismissal, benefit packages, and staff development.

We are in the process of ascertaining information concerning public school salaries, contracts and legal issues pertaining to hiring and dismissal, benefits and staff development. While we have formulated some ideas on these subjects, we need to consolidate them with those already in existence as legal policies. This area will be dealt with in depth once the charter is received. We want our teachers to be considered as respected professionals, able to make a reasonable living at what they do.

14.) School Governance:

A.) Describe the internal form of management to be implemented at your school, including any plans to contract to an outside group to manage the school.

The school will be run using a non-hierarchical form of management, with faculty and administrators having an equal voice in the running of the school. While policy decisions will be made by consensus during the planning phase, authority will be delegated in certain areas, *i.e.* the administrators will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the school, while faculty will be responsible for the curriculum. As mentioned in Question 12, Faculty/Administration meetings will be held on a regular basis.

B.) How will the Board of Trustees be chosen?

The Board of Trustees will be chosen from among persons interested in and having a commitment to integrating arts in the school curriculum and nurturing creative thinking in children. We envision a 10-member Board, consisting of parents of children enrolled in the school (1 parent from Grades 6, 7 and 8) and people from outside the school community, providing a healthy mix of each. Two faculty members will also sit on the Board, as faculty will be an integral part of the decision-making process. The Board will be rotated on a 2-year basis.

In addition, an Advisory Board will be instituted, which will meet on a quarterly basis. This board will be formed of people chosen for their financial or legal expertise, for their involvement in arts in the community, or for networking skills they could provide. This board would offer suggestions for increasing enrollment, marketing and fundraising.

C.) Describe the roles and responsibilities of the board.

The roles and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees would be to set policies for the school and to have fiscal and legal responsibility for the school. There would be a system of checks and balances, however: the Board would propose school policies and budgets for Faculty/Administrative approval, and the Faculty would propose educational programs for Board approval. A consensus style of decision-making will be preferred.

D.) Describe the relationship of the board to teachers, administrators, students and families.

We see the role of the Board of Trustees and the Faculty/Administration as being equal in weight: both groups' input will be equally considered, and both will have the best interests of the school and its children as their goal. Each will have different areas of responsibility, as outlined above in #14 A. Both the Board of Trustees and the Faculty/Administration will have a responsibility to parents and students to create the best learning environment possible in accordance with the mission statement of the school.

E.) Describe the nature of parental and student involvement in decision-making matters.

The interests and opinions of parents and students are very important to the Board of Trustees. As stated in #14B, parents will sit on the Board of Trustees. Parents not on the Board and students are always encouraged to make their concerns known to the Board or to the Faculty; their input will always be considered in the decision-making process. Furthermore, regular discussions will take place between student representatives and the Faculty or Board, concerning policies directly involving the students. It will be incumbent on the Faculty or Board to give serious thought to the students' concerns and to let them know the reasoning process by which policy decisions are made. The result of this will allow students to feel actively involved in the goals of the school.

F.) Describe the nature and extent of community involvement in school activities.

Because of the emphasis on the arts at the school, community support for performances or shows will of course be encouraged. School events will be publicized in the community and they will be open to all. Persons involved in the arts or with skills or talents relevant to the school will be invited to share their expertise with students, either on a one-time or ongoing basis. Working artists, writers, scientists, etc., will always be sought out and encouraged to participate in the activities of the school.

15.) Building Options:

A.) Describe your present options for a school building.

Present options include the vacant classroom space made available as a result of the 1992 redistricting of the Duxbury Public Schools, specifically the "Alden Upper" school building.

B.) Demonstrate how this site would be a suitable facility for the proposed school.

This site would be not only suitable, but highly desirable, for a charter school because of the availability of traditional school classroom amenities, as well as a "campus" of options as described in #4A and 4B to provide out-of-the-classroom learning.

C.) Discuss any progress or future plans for acquisition of a school building.

We have no acquisition plans at this time.

D.) *Describe financing plans, if any.*

Not applicable at this time.

SURVEY OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT

RECEIVED

We, the undersigned, support the concept of a Charter School on the South Shore that is arts-integrated and inter-disciplinary in its approach. We believe there is a need for a school that teaches children to think creatively and that allows them to grow in all areas of their lives, not just the academic. We believe that such a charter school will nurture childrens' natural love of learning and encourage them to pursue learning joyfully throughout their lives.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE
OF EDUCATION

<u>Name</u>	<u>Town</u>
Cecilia Greenbaum	Duxbury
Marsha Holla-McCarthy	Duxbury
Louise Noyes-Ballouin	Duxbury
Ann L. Hoban	Duxbury
Susan D. Dupuis	Kingston
Lucy Marton Sullo	Pembroke
Janet K. Smith	Duxbury
Susan Chandler	Duxbury
Daniel Becker	Duxbury
George H. Andersson	Marshfield
Donald M. Chat Ed D	Duxbury
Daniel Duxbury	Duxbury
Brendan Hanlon	Mt. Fld.
Daniel Vasconcelos	Pembroke
Geald Dupuis	Kingston
Randal A. Fisher	Duxbury
Sandra L. Fisher	Duxbury

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Name

Town

Tracy O'Connell

Duxbury

Cynthia Todd Fiorini

Duxbury

Nancy Ehr

Duxbury

Janet Petrella

Duxbury

Maryann Gordon

Marshfield

John Petrella

Duxbury

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Name

Town

Jacqueline O'Farrell

Duxbury

Beverly A Johnson

Duxbury

Mary E. Harman

Duxbury

Jacqueline B. Smith-Miller

Duxbury

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Name

Town

~~Alfred Apple~~
Dolly Deach
Cynthia Baker

Medford
Middletown
Lakewood

